



**MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF
PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS**

Up-Close

JANUARY, 2025

MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS: 37637 FIVE MILE ROAD, #236, LIVONIA, MI 48154

www.mcpihome.com

MCPI MISSION STATEMENT: The Michigan Council of Professional Investigators (MCPI) is an organizational network of investigators from across the State of Michigan founded on integrity, professionalism, and high industry standards. Our organization will strive to provide investigators with education, legislative support, business opportunities, and synergistic forums to gather and exchange ideas. The MCPI members maintain the highest standard of this and confi-

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MCPI PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - January, 2025

by Jerry Hardesty

Welcome to 2025, MCPI members! My hope is that 2024 was a successful year for everyone. As we move forward in 2025, I want to stress the importance of staying relevant and intentional about your continuing education and how associations like MCPI can assist you with sustaining your professional private investigator skillset. Board members of MCPI make it a practice to continuously look throughout the country to glean information about what training areas other associations are presenting. We look at training topic selections with our membership in mind, wanting our choices to be valuable time spent for each of you. Hopefully that is already obvious since the speakers we select are well-known experts and cutting-edge leaders in their area of expertise.

The world of private investigation is rapidly changing. Each of us must stay relevant and intentional by sustaining and growing our personal skillset. If you want to stay relevant, you must evolve. To stay relevant (especially as we age) it is important to be intentional. Be intentional about staying current in the areas you focus on in your professional investigation practice. Be intentional about being aware of new technology and software developments. For example, AI is a rapidly changing and evolving area; an area MCPI has focused on intentionally in 2024. Have you taken it to the next level by investigating, using or becoming familiar with ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini or a host of other AI tools? Are you aware of....

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...the pitfalls and privacy issues you must pay attention to if using these tools? Your clients expect you to be the expert in your area of practice, be intentional by staying up to date. Faking it can backfire and possibly cause your reputation to slide. The MCPI board works very hard to put training and networking events together so our members can become aware of and learn about standard practice updates along with new and interesting topics. My hope is that 2025 is a prosperous and successful year for each of you. Not just monetarily, but professionally also. Seize these opportunities to be informed and educated in your specific area of private investigating.

Thanks to each of you for your membership and your continued support.

-Jerry Hardesty

WELCOME to our newest Members:

Brett Coppins, Crystal Coppins,
Lindsay Wight, Kevin Swan,
Rachelle Dabrowski

2023 - 2024 MCPI BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Save the Dates:

February 6, 2025 — 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Dinner Meeting: Speaker Ken Hartman: Digital Forensics & A.I.

Location: Big Buck Brewery, 550 S. Wisconsin Ave., Gaylord, MI

April 8-9, 2025 — 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

**Criminal Defense Investigations (Day 1) and
Forensic Interviewing (Day 2) by Brandon Perron**

Location: Henry Center, 3535 Forest Road, Lansing, MI 48910

May 8, 2025 — 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Dinner Meeting: Networking Event

Location: to be determined in Kalamazoo, MI

Visit the MCPI Website to Register: www.mcpihome.com

Legislative Update:

A special thanks goes out to the MCPI Legislative Committee for keeping a close watch on the State and National Legislation impacting our Private Investigative industry. The Committee met regularly throughout 2024, and there were no changes at the end of the year with regards to any Legislation being passed on Bills that the Committee has been monitoring. The Committee will continue to meet in 2025 and we will provide more Legislative Updates throughout the year.



**MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF
PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS**

DINNER MEETING

Come and join the meeting to enhance your skills and network with other professional investigators.



THURSDAY, FEB 6, 2025
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM



BIG BUCK BREWERY
550 S. Wisconsin Ave, Gaylord, MI

MORE INFORMATION

www.mcpihome.com



2024 MCPI LISTSERV RULES & GUIDELINES:

One of the great benefits for MCPI Members has been our listserv. Every month we see outstanding communication, networking, shared ideas, help with locating experts, and referrals to cases around the State. This service provides us with an opportunity to meet and work with other PI's who we may not have previously known, to support each other, and to share our knowledge and experiences. As we continue to interact and support each other through the listserv, please also remember the importance of our listserv Rules and Guidelines:

This listserv is owned by MCPI and is a privilege to its members. Posts are not moderated and do not necessarily reflect the opinion or endorsement of MCPI. Please follow these rules:

- The listserv shall only be utilized by current MCPI members, in good standing.
 - The listserv may only be used as a means for discussion, networking, Q&A, and/or to otherwise further professional development within the professional investigation industry.
 - No reposting of other member's messages without their approval.
 - No flaming, profanity, obscenity, blatant advertising or libelous comments will be tolerated.
 - No personal attacks of any kind are allowed.
 - An identifying email signature is required on all posts.
 - Posts to this listserv are to concern areas of interest to MCPI and/or the field of professional investigators (PIs). This list is professional and business oriented.
 - No use of this listserv to address disputes with a member, non-member, or the MCPI.
 - No disseminating of messages from, or on behalf of, those that have been removed from the listserv or those that are not current MCPI members.
- **Any violation of these rules could result in a suspension or removal from the listserv and/or MCPI. Disciplinary Action for offenders will be acted upon at the discretion of the MCPI Board of Directors.**

Thank you for your support of MCPI!



MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF
PROFESSIONAL INVESTIGATORS
IS OFFERING

TRAINING BY BRANDON A. PERRON



**HENRY CENTER FOR EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT
3535 FOREST ROAD, LANSING, MI 48910**

Training classes are open to all professional investigators, detectives, public defenders, and anyone else interested in attending.

April 8, 2025

CRIMINAL DEFENSE INVESTIGATIONS

Criminal Defense Investigation: FAST TRACK Component Method of Criminal Defense Investigation & Case Management

- April 8 - 8:00am - 5:00pm
- A copy of *Uncovering Reasonable Doubt: The Component Method* will be provided to all attendees
- This training satisfies the academic requirement to apply for the advanced designation of Board Certified Criminal Defense Investigator (CCDI)
- Continental Breakfast & Buffet Lunch included

\$195 MCPI Members

April 9, 2025

FORENSIC INTERVIEWING

Forensic Interviewing: FAST TRACK Forensic Testimonial Evidence Recovery Method

- April 9 - 8:00am - 5:00pm
- A copy of *Forensic Testimonial Evidence Recovery - The FTER Method* will be provided to all attendees
- This training satisfies the academic requirement to apply for the advanced designation of Certified Forensic Interviewer - FTER Method (CFI-FTER)
- Continental Breakfast & Buffet Lunch included

\$195 MCPI Members

REGISTER FOR BOTH CLASSES AND SAVE

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China's Spy Agency Goes Public, By Ron Alvarez

Published January 17, 2025

In November, the *Wall Street Journal (WSJ)* published an article titled, "[A Xi Enforcer is Revving Up China's Spy Machine—and Alarming the West.](#)"

The article explores the documented actions and public comments made by the head of China's spy agency, the Ministry of State Security (MSS).

The MSS chief said, "*Create more advanced means of attack and defense, and strive to improve our ability to use science and technology to safeguard national security.*"

What Does That Mean?

This statement is not just rhetoric; it is a call to action. The MSS chief is urging Chinese citizens, agencies, and private firms to infiltrate foreign nations, particularly the U.S., to steal sensitive information and undermine Western national security.

The *WSJ* article highlights, "*The expansive effort, officials say, has mobilized security agencies, private firms and civilians to amass troves of information.*"

What makes this effort particularly alarming is the public nature of the MSS campaign. For decades, the MSS operated in secrecy, but now it is stepping into the spotlight with a clear strategy to engage ordinary Chinese citizens in national security efforts.

This MSS Announcement is Not for the Chinese People

While the MSS is publicly framing its espionage activities as defensive and necessary, this message is primarily aimed at Western nations, especially the U.S. It is designed to instill fear, project power, and shift blame.

Chinese citizens, however, have little choice in these matters. They are compelled to cooperate with the state to support espionage efforts, often under threat of severe consequences.

China's Spy Agency Goes Public, continued

China remains the wolf disguised in a lamb's outfit—presenting itself as a victim while aggressively pursuing global dominance through intellectual property theft and information warfare.

What Public Medium is the MSS Now Using?

For the first time, the MSS has ventured into social media. The *WSJ* article describes how the MSS launched a WeChat account in the summer of 2023 to connect with ordinary Chinese citizens. The account urged people to advance President Xi Jinping's vision by building a *"people's line of defense for national security."*

Other quotes from the *WSJ* article include:

- *"Chen [the MSS chief] brought his publicity skills to the MSS, an agency long shrouded in secrecy with no official website or spokesperson."*
- *"The internet is the new battlefield, and new media is the new combat power."*
- *"Officials must be 'good at transforming the mysterious, miraculous, and divine nature of national-security work into strengths in communication, penetration, and influence.'"*

This use of social media marks a significant shift for the MSS, signaling its intent to modernize its espionage tactics and involve ordinary citizens in its efforts.

Analysis of the MSS Strategy

The MSS's public approach serves multiple purposes:

1. **Intimidation:** By making their intentions clear, the MSS seeks to warn Western nations of its capabilities.
2. **Propaganda:** It portrays China as a victim forced to defend itself against Western aggression, deflecting attention from its own espionage activities.
3. **Engagement:** By involving civilians, the MSS amplifies its efforts and creates a culture of nationalistic duty tied to espionage.

Another quote from the *WSJ* article emphasizes this point:

China's Spy Agency Goes Public, continued

“The MSS’s social media work is not just about communication—it’s about penetration and influence. The agency’s use of WeChat and other platforms is a calculated move to turn the internet into a battleground for information warfare.”

Final Thoughts

This is yet another example of the “pot calling the kettle black.”

To be clear, the MSS’s strategy will continue to involve stealing intellectual property and accumulating vast amounts of sensitive information—whether through hacking government agencies, infiltrating private firms, or targeting the personal data of average citizens.

The Chinese MSS’s efforts to steal will intensify during the next U.S. administration.

It is imperative for public and private industries in the U.S. to take proactive measures to protect intellectual property and sensitive data. The internet has become the primary battlefield in this modern Cold War, and vigilance is no longer optional—it is a necessity.

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